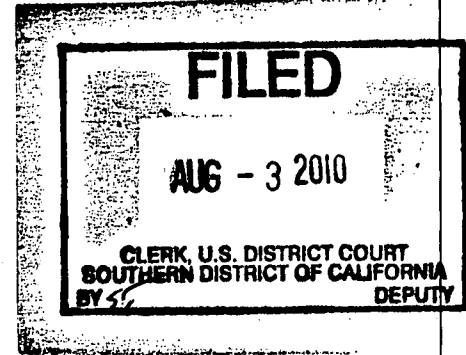


1 **Todd M. Friedman (216752)**  
2 **Law Offices of Todd M. Friedman, P.C.**  
3 **369 S. Doheny Dr. #415**  
4 **Beverly Hills, CA 90211**  
5 **Phone: 877 206-4741**  
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7 **tfriedman@attorneysforconsumers.com**  
8 **Attorney for Plaintiff**



9 **UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**  
10 **FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**

11 **RAMSEY ESPARZA,**

12 **Plaintiff,**

13 **vs.**

14 **MERCANTILE ADJUSTMENT**  
15 **BUREAU, LLC,**

16 **Defendant.**  
17  
18

) Case No. **10CV 1619** **JLS WVG**  
)  
) **COMPLAINT FOR VIOLATION**  
) **OF FEDERAL FAIR DEBT**  
) **COLLECTION PRACTICES ACT**  
) **AND ROSENTHAL FAIR DEBT**  
) **COLLECTION PRACTICES ACT**  
)  
)  
)  
)

19 **I. INTRODUCTION**

20 1. This is an action for damages brought by an individual consumer for  
21 Defendant's violations of the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, 15 U.S.C.  
22 §1692, *et seq.* (hereinafter "FDCPA"), and the Rosenthal Fair Debt Collection  
23 Practices Act, Cal Civ Code §1788, *et seq.* (hereinafter "RFDCPA"), both of  
24 which prohibit debt collectors from engaging in abusive, deceptive, and unfair  
25 practices.  
26  
27  
28

## II. JURISDICTION

2. Jurisdiction of this Court arises under 15 U.S.C. §1692k (d).

## III. PARTIES

3. Plaintiff, Ramsey Esparza ("Plaintiff"), is a natural person residing in San Diego county in the state of California, and is a "consumer" as defined by the FDCPA, 15 U.S.C. §1692a(3) and is a "debtor" as defined by Cal Civ Code §1788.2(h).

4. At all relevant times herein, Defendant, Mercantile Adjustment Bureau, LLC ("Defendant") was a company engaged, by use of the mails and telephone, in the business of collecting a debt from Plaintiff which qualifies as a "debt," as defined by 15 U.S.C. §1692a(5), and a "consumer debt," as defined by Cal Civ Code §1788.2(f). Defendant regularly attempts to collect debts alleged to be due another, and therefore is a "debt collector" as defined by the FDCPA, 15 U.S.C. §1692a(6), and RFDCPA, Cal Civ Code §1788.2(c).

## IV. FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS

5. On or about May 10, 2010, Defendant contacted Plaintiff in connection with an attempt to collect an alleged outstanding debt.

6. Plaintiff made current payments towards the alleged outstanding debt until the original creditor requested a larger payment.

1           7.     The original creditor charged off the account and sold the alleged  
2 outstanding debt to Defendant.  
3

4           8.     On at least one occasion, Defendant contacted Plaintiff's wife at a  
5 number associated with her work.  
6

7           9.     Defendant, said or implied, that non-payment of the alleged  
8 outstanding debt would result in a wage garnishment.  
9

10          10.    Plaintiff contacted Defendant to inquire regarding the threats  
11 garnishing his wife's wages.  
12

13          11.    An employee of Defendant informed Plaintiff that the account would  
14 be referred to litigation and they may attempt to ask for more than \$30,000.  
15 Defendant, then offered to settle the debt with Plaintiff for the amount of \$8,000,  
16 given that he make payments on the alleged outstanding debt.  
17

18          12.    Defendant's conduct violated the FDCPA and the RFDCPA in  
19 multiple ways, including but not limited to:  
20

- 21          a) Communicating with Plaintiff at times or places which  
22             were known or should have been known to be inconvenient  
23             for Plaintiff (§1692c(a)(1));
- 24          b) Using unfair or unconscionable means against Plaintiff in  
25             connection with an attempt to collect a debt (§1692f);
- 26          c) Engaging in conduct the natural consequence of which is to  
27             harass, oppress, or abuse Plaintiff (§1692d);
- 28          d) Communicating or threatening to communicate credit  
            information which is known or which should be known to  
            be false (§1692e(8));

- e) Causing Plaintiff's telephone to ring repeatedly or continuously with intent to harass, annoy or abuse Plaintiff (§ 1692d(5));
- f) Falsely representing the character, amount, or legal status of Plaintiff's debt (§1692e(2)(A));
- g) Falsely representing that a legal proceeding has been, is about to be, or will be instituted unless payment of a consumer debt is made (Cal Civ Code §1788.13(j));
- h) Threatening Plaintiff that nonpayment of Plaintiff's debt may result in the arrest of Plaintiff or the seizure, garnishment, attachment or sale of any property or the garnishment or attachment of wages of Plaintiff, where such action was not in fact contemplated by the debt collector and permitted by the law (Cal Civ Code §1788.10(e)); and
- i) Falsely representing or implying that nonpayment of Plaintiff's debt would result in the seizure, garnishment, attachment, or sale of Plaintiff's property or sale of Plaintiff's property or wages, where such action is not lawful or Defendant did not intend to take such action (§1692e(4))

13. As a result of the above violations of the FDCPA and RFDCPA Plaintiff suffered and continues to suffer injury to Plaintiff's feelings, personal humiliation, embarrassment, mental anguish and emotional distress, and Defendant is liable to Plaintiff for Plaintiff's actual damages, statutory damages, and costs and attorney's fees.

///

///

///

**COUNT I: VIOLATION OF FAIR DEBT  
COLLECTION PRACTICES ACT**

14. Plaintiff reincorporates by reference all of the preceding paragraphs.

**PRAYER FOR RELIEF**

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff respectfully prays that judgment be entered against the Defendant for the following:

- A. Declaratory judgment that Defendant's conduct violated the FDCPA;
- B. Actual damages;
- C. Statutory damages;
- D. Costs and reasonable attorney's fees; and,
- E. For such other and further relief as may be just and proper.

**COUNT II: VIOLATION OF ROSENTHAL  
FAIR DEBT COLLECTION PRACTICES ACT**

15. Plaintiff reincorporates by reference all of the preceding paragraphs.

16. To the extent that Defendant's actions, counted above, violated the RFDCPA, those actions were done knowingly and willfully

**PRAYER FOR RELIEF**

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff respectfully prays that judgment be entered against the Defendant for the following:

- A. Declaratory judgment that Defendant's conduct violated the RFDCPA;
- B. Actual damages;
- C. Statutory damages for willful and negligent violations;

1 D. Costs and reasonable attorney's fees,

2 E. For such other and further relief as may be just and proper.

3  
4 **PLAINTIFF HEREBY REQUESTS A TRIAL BY JURY**

5  
6  
7 Respectfully submitted this 12<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2010.

8  
9  
10 By: 

11 **TODD M. FRIEDMAN (216752)**

12 **LAW OFFICES OF TODD M.**

13 **FRIEDMAN, P.C.**

14 **369 S. Doheny Dr. #415**

15 **Beverly Hills, CA 90211**

16 **Phone: 877 206-4741**

17 **Fax: 866 633-0228**

18 **tfriedman@attorneysforconsumers.com**

19 **Attorney for Plaintiff**  
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Court Name: USDC California Southern  
Division: 3  
Receipt Number: CAS016552  
Cashier ID: bhartman  
Transaction Date: 08/03/2010  
Payer Name: TODD M FRIEDMAN LAW OFFICE

-----  
CIVIL FILING FEE

For: ESPARZA V MERCANTILE ADJ BUREA  
Case/Party: D-CAS-3-10-CV-001619-001  
Amount: \$350.00

-----  
CHECK

Check/Money Order Num: 2466  
Amt Tendered: \$350.00

-----  
Total Due: \$350.00  
Total Tendered: \$350.00  
Change Amt: \$0.00

There will be a fee of \$45.00  
charged for any returned check.

JS 44 (Rev. 12/07)

## CIVIL COVER SHEET

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other documents as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. (SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON THE REVERSE OF THE FORM.)

## I. (a) PLAINTIFFS

RAMSEY ESPARZA

(b) County of Residence of First Listed Plaintiff San Diego  
(EXCEPT IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES)

(c) Attorney's (Firm Name, Address, and Telephone Number)

Law Offices of Todd M. Friedman, P.C.  
69 S. Doheny Dr., #415, Beverly Hills, CA 90211

## DEFENDANTS

MERCANTILE ADJUSTMENT BUREAU, LLC

County of Residence of First Listed Defendant  
(IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES ONLY)

NOTE: IN LAND CONDEMNATION CASES, USE THE LOCATION OF THE LAND INVOLVED.

Attorneys (If Known)

10CV 1619

JLS WVG

## II. BASIS OF JURISDICTION (Place an "X" in One Box Only)

- ☐ 1 U.S. Government Plaintiff  
☐ 2 U.S. Government Defendant  
☒ 3 Federal Question (U.S. Government Not a Party)  
☐ 4 Diversity (Indicate Citizenship of Parties in Item III)

## III. CITIZENSHIP OF PRINCIPAL PARTIES (Place an "X" in One Box for Plaintiff and One Box for Defendant)

- |   |                            |                            |   |                            |                            |
|---|----------------------------|----------------------------|---|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Citizen of This State                   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | Incorporated or Principal Place of Business In This State     | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 |
| Citizen of Another State                | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | Incorporated and Principal Place of Business In Another State | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| Citizen or Subject of a Foreign Country | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | Foreign Nation  | <input type="checkbox"/> 6 | <input type="checkbox"/> 6 |

## IV. NATURE OF SUIT (Place an "X" in One Box Only)

CONTRACT	TORTS	FORFEITURE/PENALTY	BANKRUPTCY	OTHER STATUTES
<input type="checkbox"/> 110 Insurance <input type="checkbox"/> 120 Marine <input type="checkbox"/> 130 Miller Act <input type="checkbox"/> 140 Negotiable Instrument <input type="checkbox"/> 150 Recovery of Overpayment & Enforcement of Judgment <input type="checkbox"/> 151 Medicare Act <input type="checkbox"/> 152 Recovery of Defaulted Student Loans (Excl. Veterans) <input type="checkbox"/> 153 Recovery of Overpayment of Veteran's Benefits <input type="checkbox"/> 160 Stockholders' Suits <input type="checkbox"/> 190 Other Contract <input type="checkbox"/> 195 Contract Product Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 196 Franchise	<b>PERSONAL INJURY</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 310 Airplane <input type="checkbox"/> 315 Airplane Product Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 320 Assault, Libel & Slander <input type="checkbox"/> 330 Federal Employers' Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 340 Marine <input type="checkbox"/> 345 Marine Product Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 350 Motor Vehicle <input type="checkbox"/> 355 Motor Vehicle Product Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 360 Other Personal Injury <b>PERSONAL INJURY</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 362 Personal Injury - Med. Malpractice <input type="checkbox"/> 365 Personal Injury - Product Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 368 Asbestos Personal Injury Product Liability <b>PERSONAL PROPERTY</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 370 Other Fraud <input type="checkbox"/> 371 Truth in Lending <input type="checkbox"/> 380 Other Personal Property Damage <input type="checkbox"/> 385 Property Damage Product Liability	<input type="checkbox"/> 610 Agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> 620 Other Food & Drug <input type="checkbox"/> 625 Drug Related Seizure of Property 21 USC 881 <input type="checkbox"/> 630 Liquor Laws <input type="checkbox"/> 640 R.R. & Truck <input type="checkbox"/> 650 Airline Regs. <input type="checkbox"/> 660 Occupational Safety/Health <input type="checkbox"/> 690 Other <b>LABOR</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 710 Fair Labor Standards Act <input type="checkbox"/> 720 Labor/Mgmt. Relations <input type="checkbox"/> 730 Labor/Mgmt. Reporting & Disclosure Act <input type="checkbox"/> 740 Railway Labor Act <input type="checkbox"/> 790 Other Labor Litigation <input type="checkbox"/> 791 Empl. Ret. Inc. Security Act <b>IMMIGRATION</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 462 Naturalization Application <input type="checkbox"/> 463 Habeas Corpus - Alien Detainee <input type="checkbox"/> 465 Other Immigration Actions	<input type="checkbox"/> 422 Appeal 28 USC 158 <input type="checkbox"/> 423 Withdrawal 28 USC 157 <b>PROPERTY RIGHTS</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 820 Copyrights <input type="checkbox"/> 830 Patent <input type="checkbox"/> 840 Trademark <b>SOCIAL SECURITY</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 861 HIA (1395ff) <input type="checkbox"/> 862 Black Lung (923) <input type="checkbox"/> 863 DIWC/DIWW (405(g)) <input type="checkbox"/> 864 SSID Title XVI <input type="checkbox"/> 865 RSI (405(g)) <b>FEDERAL TAX SUITS</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 870 Taxes (U.S. Plaintiff or Defendant) <input type="checkbox"/> 871 IRS—Third Party 26 USC 7609	<input type="checkbox"/> 400 State Reapportionment <input type="checkbox"/> 410 Antitrust <input type="checkbox"/> 430 Banks and Banking <input type="checkbox"/> 450 Commerce <input type="checkbox"/> 460 Deportation <input type="checkbox"/> 470 Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations <input type="checkbox"/> 480 Consumer Credit <input type="checkbox"/> 490 Cable/Sat TV <input type="checkbox"/> 810 Selective Service <input type="checkbox"/> 850 Securities/Commodities/Exchange <input type="checkbox"/> 875 Customer Challenge 12 USC 3410 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 890 Other Statutory Actions <input type="checkbox"/> 891 Agricultural Acts <input type="checkbox"/> 892 Economic Stabilization Act <input type="checkbox"/> 893 Environmental Matters <input type="checkbox"/> 894 Energy Allocation Act <input type="checkbox"/> 895 Freedom of Information Act <input type="checkbox"/> 900 Appeal of Fee Determination Under Equal Access to Justice <input type="checkbox"/> 950 Constitutionality of State Statutes
<b>REAL PROPERTY</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 210 Land Condemnation <input type="checkbox"/> 220 Foreclosure <input type="checkbox"/> 230 Rent Lease & Ejectment <input type="checkbox"/> 240 Torts to Land <input type="checkbox"/> 245 Tort Product Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 290 All Other Real Property	<b>CIVIL RIGHTS</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 441 Voting <input type="checkbox"/> 442 Employment <input type="checkbox"/> 443 Housing/Accommodations <input type="checkbox"/> 444 Welfare <input type="checkbox"/> 445 Amer. w/Disabilities - Employment <input type="checkbox"/> 446 Amer. w/Disabilities - Other <input type="checkbox"/> 440 Other Civil Rights	<b>PRISONER PETITIONS</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 510 Motions to Vacate Sentence <input type="checkbox"/> 530 General <input type="checkbox"/> 535 Death Penalty <input type="checkbox"/> 540 Mandamus & Other <input type="checkbox"/> 550 Civil Rights <input type="checkbox"/> 555 Prison Condition		

## V. ORIGIN

(Place an "X" in One Box Only)

- ☒ 1 Original Proceeding  
☐ 2 Removed from State Court  
☐ 3 Remanded from Appellate Court  
☐ 4 Reinstated or Reopened  
☐ 5 Transferred from another district (specify)  
☐ 6 Multidistrict Litigation  
☐ 7 Appeal to District Judge from Magistrate Judgment

## VI. CAUSE OF ACTION

Cite the U.S. Civil Statute under which you are filing (Do not cite jurisdictional statutes unless diversity):  
15 USC 1692

Brief description of cause:  
Violation of the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act

## VII. REQUESTED IN COMPLAINT:

☐ CHECK IF THIS IS A CLASS ACTION UNDER F.R.C.P. 23

DEMAND \$

CHECK YES only if demanded in complaint:

JURY DEMAND: ☐ Yes ☐ No

## VIII. RELATED CASE(S) IF ANY

(See instructions):

JUDGE

DOCKET NUMBER

DATE

SIGNATURE OF ATTORNEY OF RECORD

07/12/2010

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

RECEIPT # 16552

AMOUNT

\$350

APPLYING IFP

JUDGE

MAG. JUDGE

CR



**INSTRUCTIONS FOR ATTORNEYS COMPLETING CIVIL COVER SHEET FORM JS 44****Authority For Civil Cover Sheet**

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replaces nor supplements the filings and service of pleading or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. Consequently, a civil cover sheet is submitted to the Clerk of Court for each civil complaint filed. The attorney filing a case should complete the form as follows:

**I. (a) Plaintiffs-Defendants.** Enter names (last, first, middle initial) of plaintiff and defendant. If the plaintiff or defendant is a government agency, use only the full name or standard abbreviations. If the plaintiff or defendant is an official within a government agency, identify first the agency and then the official, giving both name and title.

(b) County of Residence. For each civil case filed, except U.S. plaintiff cases, enter the name of the county where the first listed plaintiff resides at the time of filing. In U.S. plaintiff cases, enter the name of the county in which the first listed defendant resides at the time of filing. (NOTE: In land condemnation cases, the county of residence of the "defendant" is the location of the tract of land involved.)

(c) Attorneys. Enter the firm name, address, telephone number, and attorney of record. If there are several attorneys, list them on an attachment, noting in this section "(see attachment)".

**II. Jurisdiction.** The basis of jurisdiction is set forth under Rule 8(a), F.R.C.P., which requires that jurisdictions be shown in pleadings. Place an "X" in one of the boxes. If there is more than one basis of jurisdiction, precedence is given in the order shown below.

United States plaintiff. (1) Jurisdiction based on 28 U.S.C. 1345 and 1348. Suits by agencies and officers of the United States are included here.

United States defendant. (2) When the plaintiff is suing the United States, its officers or agencies, place an "X" in this box.

Federal question. (3) This refers to suits under 28 U.S.C. 1331, where jurisdiction arises under the Constitution of the United States, an amendment to the Constitution, an act of Congress or a treaty of the United States. In cases where the U.S. is a party, the U.S. plaintiff or defendant code takes precedence, and box 1 or 2 should be marked.

Diversity of citizenship. (4) This refers to suits under 28 U.S.C. 1332, where parties are citizens of different states. When Box 4 is checked, the citizenship of the different parties must be checked. (See Section III below; federal question actions take precedence over diversity cases.)

**III. Residence (citizenship) of Principal Parties.** This section of the JS 44 is to be completed if diversity of citizenship was indicated above. Mark this section for each principal party.

**IV. Nature of Suit.** Place an "X" in the appropriate box. If the nature of suit cannot be determined, be sure the cause of action, in Section VI below, is sufficient to enable the deputy clerk or the statistical clerks in the Administrative Office to determine the nature of suit. If the cause fits more than one nature of suit, select the most definitive.

**V. Origin.** Place an "X" in one of the seven boxes.

Original Proceedings. (1) Cases which originate in the United States district courts.

Removed from State Court. (2) Proceedings initiated in state courts may be removed to the district courts under Title 28 U.S.C., Section 1441. When the petition for removal is granted, check this box.

Remanded from Appellate Court. (3) Check this box for cases remanded to the district court for further action. Use the date of remand as the filing date.

Reinstated or Reopened. (4) Check this box for cases reinstated or reopened in the district court. Use the reopening date as the filing date.

Transferred from Another District. (5) For cases transferred under Title 28 U.S.C. Section 1404(a). Do not use this for within district transfers or multidistrict litigation transfers.

Multidistrict Litigation. (6) Check this box when a multidistrict case is transferred into the district under authority of Title 28 U.S.C. Section 1407. When this box is checked, do not check (5) above.

Appeal to District Judge from Magistrate Judgment. (7) Check this box for an appeal from a magistrate judge's decision.

**VI. Cause of Action.** Report the civil statute directly related to the cause of action and give a brief description of the cause. **Do not cite jurisdictional statutes unless diversity.** Example: U.S. Civil Statute: 47 USC 553  
Brief Description: Unauthorized reception of cable service

**VII. Requested in Complaint.** Class Action. Place an "X" in this box if you are filing a class action under Rule 23, F.R.Cv.P.

Demand. In this space enter the dollar amount (in thousands of dollars) being demanded or indicate other demand such as a preliminary injunction.

Jury Demand. Check the appropriate box to indicate whether or not a jury is being demanded.

**VIII. Related Cases.** This section of the JS 44 is used to reference related pending cases if any. If there are related pending cases, insert the docket numbers and the corresponding judge names for such cases.

**Date and Attorney Signature.** Date and sign the civil cover sheet.